

# **THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART**

## **STUDY GUIDE**



**DAVID J. CALIFF, PH.D.**

# **The Metropolitan Museum of Art**

1000 Fifth Avenue (at 82nd Street)  
New York, New York 10028-0198

## **General Information**

Information desks are located in the Great Hall and the Uris Center for Education.

Tours of museum highlights and of selected portions of the collection (American Paintings; American Rooms; Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas; Arts of Ancient Egypt; Asian Art; European Rooms; Islamic Art; Medieval Art; Old Master Paintings; 20th Century Paintings) are available. Look for the schedule at the information desks.

### **Museum Dining Facilities**

Cafeteria (9:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.): entree prices range from \$5.25 to \$7.95

Restaurant (11:30 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.): entree prices range from \$12.75 to \$16.00

Museum Bar & Cafe (11:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.): prices range from \$6.75 to \$9.00

**Photography:** Still photography of the permanent collection is permitted without flash. Tripods and video cameras are prohibited. Photography is prohibited in most special exhibitions.

**Coats and Bags:** All packages, backpacks, and umbrellas must be checked before entering the galleries. Coats must be checked or worn, not carried.

**Cell Phones:** The Metropolitan expressly forbids the use of cell phones inside the museum. Your phone should be turned completely off (not set on “silent” or “vibrate”) while you are in the museum building.

**Notetaking and Sketching:** Notetaking is permitted, but please use pencil, not ink. Sketching is permitted, but the museum likes you to register at the information desk.

### **Museum Hours (for future visits):**

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	9:30 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.
Wednesday	9:30 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.
Thursday	9:30 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.
Friday	9:30 a.m. – 8:45 p.m.
Saturday	9:30 a.m. – 8:45 p.m.
Sunday	9:30 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.
Closed:	New Year’s Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day

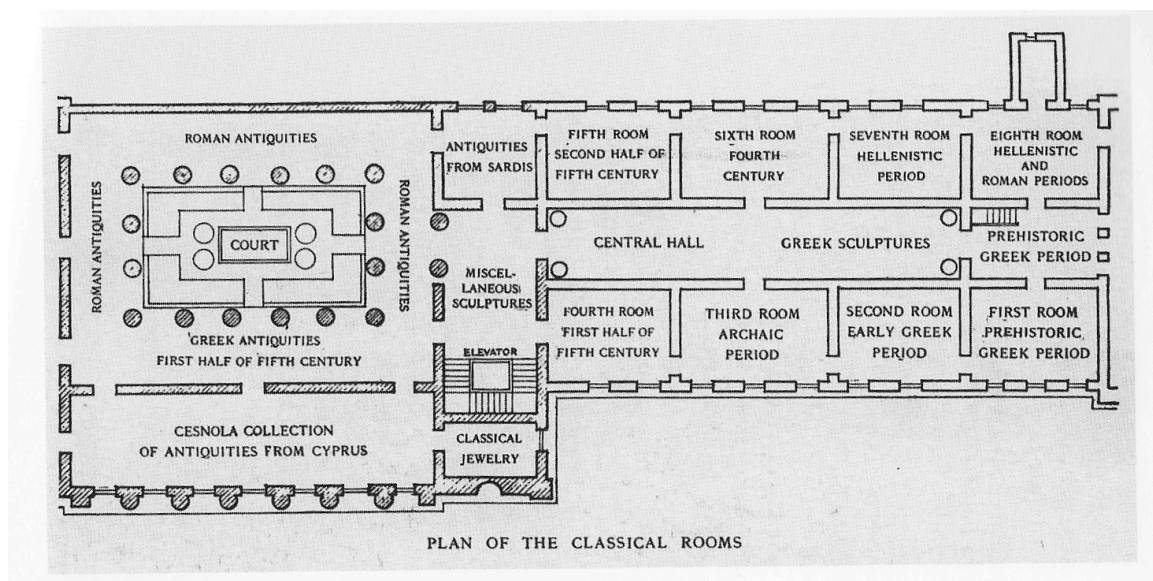
## The Greek and Roman Galleries

On April 20, 2007, the Metropolitan Museum of Art unveiled its newly redesigned and reinstalled galleries of Hellenistic, Roman, and Etruscan art after five years of construction and a cost of at least 1.2 billion dollars. (The Metropolitan has not released an official figure, but the rumor going around the museum was 1.2 billion, and that is for the latest phase alone.) The installation of the Roman and Etruscan galleries marks the completion of a fifteen-year project to transform completely the southeast corner of the museum into the magnificent new home for Greek and Roman art that is open to the public today.

The Metropolitan's holdings of classical art are among the finest in the world. To take two examples, the collection of Greek vases at the Met is arguably the finest (in terms of both quality and quantity) outside of Greece, and the collection of Roman frescoes is arguably the finest (in terms of both quality and quantity) outside of Italy. Every era is represented, from the Cycladic period to Late Antiquity. Every medium is represented: sculpture, painting, ceramics, glass, coinage, and so forth. And there is a geographic diversity that matches the Roman Empire at its greatest extent, including the entire Mediterranean region, Europe, North Africa, and Southwest Asia.

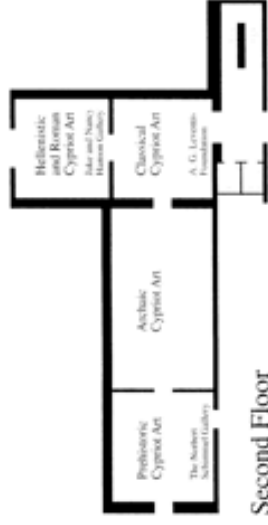
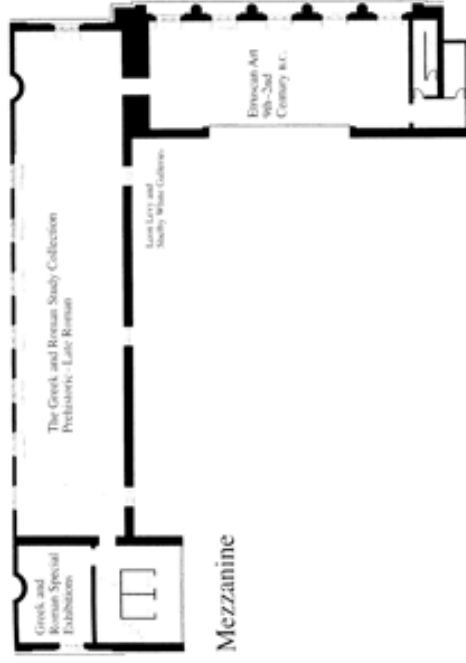
The new Hellenistic, Roman, and Etruscan sections alone occupy 30,000 square feet and display 5,300 objects, most of which have not been on public view for a generation, and many of which have never been seen since the museum opened its doors in 1870.

Here is the original plan of the galleries, followed by the current plan.



## Greek and Roman Art Galleries

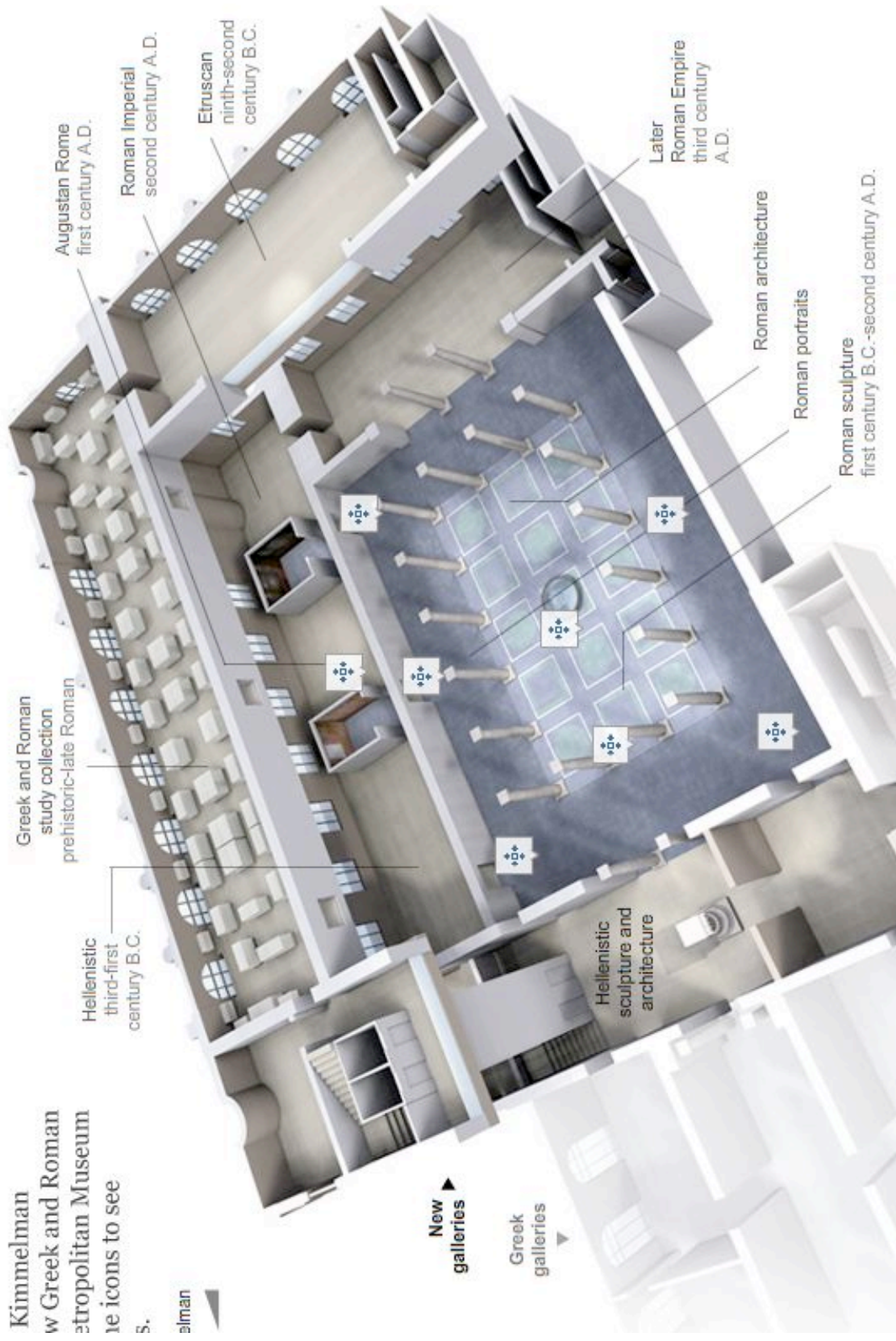
art galleries, arranged in chronological order, are the fruition of  
it's four-phase, fifteen-year-long master plan.





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## **History of the Greek and Roman Department**

- First item a sarcophagus from Roman Turkey, later used as donation box!
- Early acquisition of massive collection of Cypriot art
- Campaign to acquire casts (typical of late 19<sup>th</sup> century)
- Collecting boom in early 20<sup>th</sup> century
  - Bedrooms from Boscoreale and Boscotrecase
  - Famous Etruscan chariot
  - 4.5 million dollar Rogers Fund endowment established
  - Rivalry with MFA Boston
  - Hiring of archaeologist Edward Robinson, who hired Gisela Richter
  - Involvement of J.P. Morgan (president in 1904)
  - Key acquisitions: geometric kraters, Megakles stele, copy of Diodoumenos by Polykleitos, the Judgment of Paris pyxis, the Old Market Woman, etc.
- Opening of Wing K in 1926 with Beaux Arts central hall and McKim, Mead, and White designed sculpture court
- In the 1950s, court lost to restaurant, “one of the most distinguished and beautiful dining rooms in New York” and to administrative offices
- Classical holdings crammed into remaining spaces, storage, Greek vases badly displayed upstairs
- 1990: Carlos Picon hired to head department (after von Bothmer and Mertens) with charge to oversee reinstallation
- Phase I: Greek art, Belfer court, Jaharis galleries, 6 classical rooms
- Phase II: Cypriot art on second floor
- Phase III: relocation of restaurant
- Phase IV: Hellenistic, Roman and Etruscan, opened on 20 April 2007

## The New Roman and Etruscan Galleries

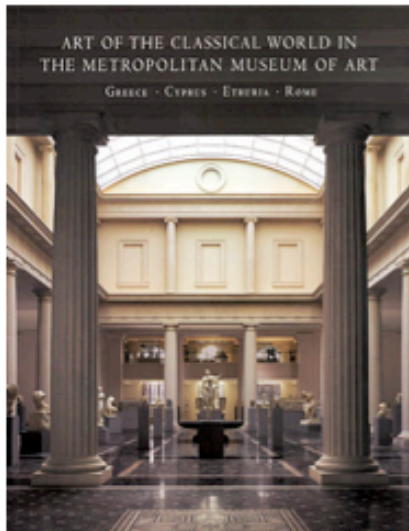
There is no event in the upcoming season that is so defining for the life of this institution, for New York, and for art lovers around the world than the completion of the New Greek and Roman Galleries, involving the installation of thousands of works of classical art from the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Here is a brief preview of those galleries, which will open to the public on April 20, 2007.

Essentially a "museum within the museum" for the Metropolitan's world-renowned collection of Hellenistic, Etruscan, Roman art, the new galleries will completely transform a space that was originally designed by the McKim, Mead and White for Roman art.

Its centerpiece is the spectacular Leon Court, a monumental play of Hellenistic and two-story atrium. This young Hercules, a work of the famous sculptor Polykleitos, will be there, along with many other great works, including our famous Aphrodite of Knidos, decorated vases—including Dionysos riding his panther—and the seasons.

Here you will meet, face to face, the emperors of Imperial Rome: Augustus, Caligula, the young Nero, Antoninus Pius, Caracalla; and a pantheon of great figures from ancient times: Herodotus, Epicurus, and many others.

In the Hellenistic treasury, you will see masterpieces of craftsmanship in precious gemstones, glass, and metals, like these great serpentine armbands in gold with two tritons, male and female, each holding a small, winged Eros. And nearby, great bronzes, like the sleeping god Eros, here depicted with great immediacy and naturalism, as a plump baby. It is one of the few bronze statues to have survived from antiquity.



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In sunlit galleries facing Fifth Avenue, there are great Roman frescoes once buried by the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A.D. The Met's cubiculum—or bedroom—from Boscoreale, has been restored and moved here, its wall paintings showing architectural vistas and fantasy gardens, and its window bars twisted by the hot lava of the volcano.

And another beautiful bedroom, the so-called "Black Bedroom," this one thought to have been made for a villa built by Agrippa, a close friend of the Emperor Augustus. On view near these masterpieces are sculptures, bronzes, and other arts of the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods, now seen together for the first time in generations. They have much to tell us about the domestic life of wealthy Romans nearly 2,000 years ago.

Up above, on an entirely new second level ringing the court, will be a large gallery for the display of the art of the Etruscans from pre-Roman Italy. Their culture was subsumed into the Roman State by the early first century B.C. Here you will find the newly restored, sixth-century B.C. Etruscan chariot, inlaid with precious elephant and hippopotamus ivory, and richly decorated with scenes from the life of the Greek hero Achilles. It is one of the only complete chariots to survive from antiquity.

For scholars, students, and the public alike, we have also created an important resource: large, airy galleries where more than 5,300 works in all media, dating from pre-historic Greek through late Roman art, can be seen and studied together.

These majestic new galleries, more than a dozen years in the making, will bring one of the world's great collections of classical art to light in a new way. Come and explore the ancient world at The Metropolitan Museum of Art this spring. The New Greek and Roman Galleries will open on April 20, 2007.

Philippe de Montebello, Director Emeritus

The Metropolitan Museum of Art





## Museum Scavenger Hunt

As you survey the museum's vast collection, see if you can find some of the artworks listed below. [NB: it will be *impossible* for you to find everything; don't even try.]

### Egyptian Art

- 1) The tomb of Perneb  
How many chambers?  
What are they?
- 2) The Temple of Dendur  
When was it built?  
By whom?

### The American Wing

- 1) A portrait of a President  
Artist:  
President:
- 2) A room from an American house  
House name:  
Original location:

### Arms and Armor

- 1) A dagger  
Country of origin:  
Date:
- 2) Armor for a horse  
Country of origin:  
Weight:

### Medieval Art

- 1) A stained-glass panel  
Original location:  
Date:

### European Sculpture and Decorative Arts

- 1) A sculpture by Rodin  
Title:
- 2) A commode  
Cabinetmaker:

## Twentieth Century Art

- 1) A painting by Picasso

Title:

- 2) An example of abstract art

Artist:

Title:

## African Art

- 1) An African sculpture

Title:

Country of origin:

Brief description:

## Greek and Roman Art

- 1) An amphora

What is it?

Date:

- 2) A bust of a Roman emperor

Emperor:

## Islamic Art

- 1) A prayer rug

Country of origin:

Date:

- 2) A bowl or vase with Arabic calligraphy

Item:

Type of script:

## The Ancient Near East

- 1) A Mesopotamian “cylinder seal”

Date:

What does the seal depict?

## Asian Art

- 1) A statue of the elephant-headed god

Name of the god:

- 2) A green Yüeh bowl with dragons

Date:

## Musical Instruments

- 1) A violin by Antonio Stradavari

Date:

City of origin:

- 2) A mayuri

What is it?

## European Painting

Find a work by:

- 1) Giotto

Title:

- 2) Botticelli

Title:

- 3) Raphael

Title:

- 4) Bruegel

Title:

- 5) El Greco

Title:

- 6) Rembrandt

Title:

- 7) Velázquez

Title:

- 8) Poussin

Title:

- 9) Delacroix

Title:

- 10) Goya

Title:

- 11) Cézanne

Title:

- 12) Van Gogh

Title:

## Common Images

- a king
- a pope
- a mythological character
- a biblical character
- a dancer
- a soldier
- a musician
- flowers
- fruit
- a lion
- a horse
- a ship
- a building
- a “classical” nude

Since the museum’s holdings are truly *encyclopedic*, it is fitting that you should end your scavenger hunt by finding Houdon’s bust of Denis Diderot. (Hint: it is in the “European Decorative Arts and Sculpture” section.)